GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5133
ANSWERED ON:11.05.2007
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FOR WELFARE OF RURAL AREAS
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the R&D institutions and the scientific community are doing research for the needs of rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to improve the response of R&D institutions and scientific community towards welfare of rural areas?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) & (b): Yes Sir. The government has several schemes to catalyze and support research, development and adaptation of relevant and appropriate technologies for empowering and improving quality of life in rural areas. Technology institutions /R&D laboratories function as a source of relevant technologies and models which are implemented in rural areas through voluntary agencies and other institutions. The impact of the programmes has been felt in local areas. However due to inadequacy of funds and other resources for such programmes, large scale dissemination has suffered. Inspite constraints, many models and local level technologies have been developed and are being practiced. Some of the proven technologies/packages are

Fruit/vegetable processing and preservation for value addition at village level with quality control. Model is working at 23 locations in the country,

Agro technologies for cultivation/semi processing of high value medicinal plants by women,

Drier for coconut gratings; paper and biomass based drier for horticulture produce,

Techniques of Dehydration of flowers,

Biofertilizers eg. Azolla, BGA,

Development of wool carding machine,

Ergonomically suitable tools/equipments for use by women in sericulture,

Fish Aggregation Devices (FAD) for coastal fisher folk,

Technology package for low-temperature glazing for making red clay pottery developed and many units are in operation especially in Kanyakumari area,

Low-cost diagnostic medical kits for urinary tract infections,

Setting up of bio villages,

Setting up of 16 Women Technology Parks and 5 Rural Technology Parks as integrated model for technology dissemination,

Biogas plants using spoilt grains, fruits, etc. for small restaurants/dhabas. 500 units have been installed in Maharashtra,

Non pressurized sarai cooker using charcoal which takes 40 minutes for complete cooking. This is under commercial production,

Standardization of tissue culture techniques for producing disease free banana in Sundarban delta. 4 lakhs plantlets have been sold by trained women group,

Lac extraction and processing machines is being popularized in lac producing area of Jharkhand,

Technology for low-cost sanitary napkins has been developed and disseminated,

Upgradation of watermills with multipurpose use for generating electricity in remote mountain regions of Uttaranchal, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and North-East. About 2000 watermills have been upgraded.

Centres established in underserved and underdeveloped areas to investigate and find solutions to health problems of local populations.

Extramural projects for studying the health conditions and diseases of tribals,

Research directed towards poverty driven diseases such as tuberculosis, leprosy, malaria, filariasis and visceral leishmaniasis.

670 water filters capable of removing even viruses have been installed in many rural areas. The technology was developed by CSIR.

(c) The government is attaching vital importance for encouraging and motivating scientific communities and R&D institutions to improve the response in rural areas by supporting location specific projects and innovations towards welfare of rural areas. In this direction efforts are being made to give recognition to individuals/institutions by way of awards, fellowships and other incentives.